

ABSTRACT

DISSERTATION: Experiencing Korean *P'ansori* as a Western-Style Singer: a Vocal Interpretation of Dongjin Kim's Operas Based on Kim's *Shin-Ch'ang-Ak*

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DEGREE: Doctor of Arts

COLLEGE: Fine Arts

DATE: May, 2012

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P'ansori is a unique form of Korean traditional music in the opera genre. It is known for its distinctive rhythm, vocal timbre, key, and texture. Musical pioneer Dongjin Kim (1913-2009) masterfully blended authentic Korean music with Western style music most notably in two operas that retained their *p'ansori* heritage while also appealing to wider audiences. Kim believed in the importance of accurately portraying Korean culture and history in his vocal music feeling that Korea's "unique national music" had much to contribute to the rest of the world.

Although traditional *p'ansori* operas are sung with a gritty and husky voice that lacks any sense of resonance, Kim adapted this harsh style for Western singers by introducing what he called "*shin-ch'ang-ak*" (New Singing Music). The purpose of *shin-ch'ang-ak* was to allow singers to retain their normal vocal technique while preserving key elements of traditional *p'ansori*. Previous studies of *shin-ch'ang-ak* have focused primarily on its history, purpose, and design and typically have been written in the Korean language. In this study I expound upon this work in English and I provide a vocal interpretation of Kim's *shin-ch'ang-ak* as applied to excerpts taken from his two operas. I

also offer my own suggestions for performing Kim's *shin-ch'ang-ak* provided from the perspective of a performer who has practiced Western music.